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BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION 1 201 2 3 **COMMISSIONERS** 4 JEFF HATCH-MILLER, Chairman WILLIAM A. MUNDELL 5 MARC SPITZER MIKE GLEASON KRISTIN K. MAYES 6 7 8 DOCKET NO. E-01345A-05-0526 IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY FOR APPROVAL OF A POWER SUPPLY ADJUSTOR SURCHARGE. 10 11 DOCKET NO. E-01345A-03-0437 IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY 12 FOR A HEARING TO DETERMINE THE FAIR VALUE OF THE UTILITY PROPERTY 13 OF THE COMPANY FOR RATEMAKING **NOTICE OF FILING** PURPOSES, TO FIX A JUST AND 14 STAFF RESPONSIVE TESTIMONY ON REASONABLE RATE OF RETURN APPLICATION FOR POWER SUPPLY TEHREON, TO APROVE RATE SCHEDULES 15 ADJUSTOR SURCHARGE DESIGNED TO DEVELOP SUCH RETURN, AND FOR APPROVAL OF PURCHASED 16 POWER CONTRACT. 17 18 Pursuant to the Procedural Order issued September 23, 2005, Staff hereby files the 19 Responsive Testimony of William Gehlen on the Application of Arizona Public Service Company for 20 Approval of a Power Supply Adjustor Surcharge in this docket. 21 RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 17TH day of October, 2005. 22 23 Christopher C. Kempley, Chief Counsel 24 Janet Wagner, Attorney Jason Gellman, Attorney 25 Arizona Corporation Commission 1200 West Washington Street 26 Phoenix, Arizona 85007 (602) 542-3402 27

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BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

Chairman WILLIAM A. MUNDELL Commissioner MARC SPITZER Commissioner MIKE GLEASON Commissioner KRISTIN K. MAYES Commissioner	
IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY FOR A HEARING TO DETERMINE THE FAIR VALUE OF THE UTILITY PROPERTY OF THE COMPANY FOR RATEMAKING PURPOSES, TO FIX A JUST AND REASONABLE RATE OF RETURN THEREON, TO APPROVE RATE SCHEDULES DESIGNED TO DEVELOP SUCH RETURN, AND FOR APPROVAL OF PURCHASED POWER CONTRACT) DOCKET NO. E-01345A-03-0437)))))))
IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY FOR APPROVAL OF A POWER SUPPLY ADJUSTOR SURCHARGE) DOCKET NO. E-01345A-05-0526)) _)
DIRECT	
TESTIMO	NY
OF	
WILLIAM GE	EHLEN
PUBLIC UTILITY A	ANALYST V

UTILITIES DIVISION

ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

OCTOBER 17, 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY DOCKET NOS. E-01345A-03-0437 & E-01345A-05-0526

On July 22, 2005, Arizona Public Service Company ("APS" or "Company") filed with the Commission an application for approval of a Power Supply Adjustor ("PSA") Surcharge (Docket No. E-01345A-05-0526). The request was for recovery of \$100 million to be collected over a period of 24 months. Subsequent to filing its application, APS agreed with Staff and the Residential Utility Consumer Office ("RUCO") to defer \$20 million from this specific application. APS now requests recovery of \$80 million over a 24 month period.

On September 14, 2005, this matter was consolidated for purposes of hearing with the review of the PSA Plan of Administration under Docket No. E-01345A-03-0437.

The result of Staff's analysis indicates that the PSA Surcharge amount of \$80 million requested by APS is reasonable. A combination of factors including rapid load growth, significant shift to the use of natural gas fired generation, and unforeseeable increase in the price of natural gas due to tight market conditions have caused natural gas and purchased power costs to increase at unanticipated amounts, resulting in significant increases in the PSA balancing account. The initial APS filing on July 22, 2005, was made in anticipation of the under-collected amount in the PSA balancing account reaching \$100 million. The most recent APS filing shows an under-collected balance of \$127.5 million as of August 31, 2005, and a projected increase of approximately \$20 million for September 2005. This balance did not include effects of Hurricane Katrina (August 29, 2005) and Hurricane Rita (September 24, 2005) which are having additional upward pressure on natural gas and purchased power costs.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and their resultant damage to the natural gas infrastructure and drilling rigs have driven natural gas prices to levels not deemed possible six weeks ago, much less four months ago when APS made their initial filing. At this point it is not likely that the under-collected balance in the PSA balancing account will fall below \$100 million even with the approval of the \$80 million surcharge as requested by APS. Present projections show the PSA balancing account increasing by an amount equal to, or more, per month than the average \$3.33 million per month offset by the requested APS Surcharge for ten (10) of the fourteen (14) months from November 2005 through December 2006. When the hurricane damage assessment has been completed, the natural gas and purchased power markets are expected to stabilize. At that point Staff will be able to better forecast increases or decreases in the PSA to determine the long run effects on the Company and the customers.

Staff recommends approval of the APS \$80 million PSA Surcharge request to be collected over a 24 month period. The Surcharge is to be implemented the first billing cycle in November 2005. The impact on the average residential bill will be an increase of \$1.48 per month, (or 1.3%) during the summer months, and \$0.96 per month, (or 1.6%) during the winter months.

INTRODUCTION

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- Q. Please state your name, occupation, and business address.
- A. My name is William Gehlen. I am a Public Utility Analyst V employed by the Arizona Corporation Commission ("ACC" or "Commission") in the Utilities Division ("Staff"). My business address is 1200 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007.

Q. Briefly describe your responsibilities as a Public Utility Analyst.

- A. In my capacity as a Public Utility Analyst V, I provide recommendations to the Commission on energy related issues.
- Q. Please describe your educational background and professional experience.
 - I earned a BS degree in Business Administration from Aquinas College, and an MBA from Western Michigan University. My background includes 26 years of utility experience with 16 years in investor owned utilities. In the fuels area, I have been responsible for the planning, procurement and transportation of multiple fuel categories (natural gas, gasoline, coal, oil and nuclear). In addition, I have been responsible for the procurement of land, equipment, services, consulting and construction contracts, and purchased power (short, medium and long term). Management positions also included responsibility for integrated resource planning, long range forecasting, transmission planning, environmental affairs and strategic planning. My most recent 10 years experience includes 1 year with Office of Consumer Advocate for the State of Nevada as a regulatory analyst, and 9 years in the development and marketing of energy trading platforms, origination of purchase power agreements, real time energy trading, and support of merchant generators in gathering market intelligence on regulatory, fuel and product issues to aid in understanding inter and intra regional market design issues and solutions.

Q. What is the scope of your testimony in this case?

A. I will address the Arizona Public Service Company's ("APS" or "Company") request for a Power Supply Adjustor ("PSA") surcharge with a billing date to be effective the first billing cycle in November 2005. I will evaluate the costs attributable to the request, and put these costs into perspective in view of recent developments in the fuels and purchased power markets. Estimated customer cost increases will be developed and discussed. In addition, the impact of the Company hedging program will be addressed.

Q. Describe the PSA Rate Mechanism.

A. In Decision No. 67744, a PSA Rate Mechanism was authorized for the Company. The purpose of the PSA is to track APS' costs of obtaining fuel for internal generation, revenue from off-system sales, and the costs of obtaining purchased power from the market. The actual costs of fuel and purchased power on an ongoing basis would be compared to the base cost of \$0.020743 per kWh (Base Fuel Recovery Amount) established in Decision No. 67744. The PSA permits the Company to defer for later recovery/refund, through the Adjustor Rate, 90 percent of the fuel and purchased power costs in excess of/below the amount recovered through the Base Fuel Recovery Amount. The major features of the PSA are: a 90 percent ratepayer/10 percent APS sharing mechanism, the recognition of off-system sales revenues, the inclusion of fuel and purchased power costs, a bandwidth on changes in the Adjustor Rate of plus or minus \$0.004 per kWh over the life of the PSA, a balancing account and a surcharge mechanism.

The results of the PSA mechanism are applied to customer bills through the Adjustor Rate. The Adjustor Rate is to be reset April 1st of each year and maintained for a one year period. In subsequent years, the Company would file with the Commission on March 1 their calculation for the Adjustor rate to become effective April 1 for the next 12 months.

Per Decision No. 67744, if the on going fuel and purchased power expense in the PSA reaches plus or minus \$50 million, as compared to the base Fuel Recovery Amount, the Company is required to file a request for Commission approval of a PSA surcharge/credit, or an explanation of why a surcharge/credit is not necessary. In addition a cap of \$100 million was placed on the balancing account.

Q. Describe the Company's PSA Surcharge request.

A. On July 22, 2005, the Company filed for approval of a PSA Surcharge due to a projected under-collection of its fuel and purchased power expenses of \$100 million by August 31, 2005. The filing anticipated a surcharge of \$0.00177 per kWh with a recovery period of 24 months and the surcharge to be effective the first billing cycle in November 2005, which would result in approximately a 2.2 percent revenue increase relative to the Base Fuel Recovery Amount of \$0.020743 per kWh for the requested two year amortization period. Subsequent to this request, the Company agreed with Staff and the Residential Utility Consumer Office ("RUCO") to defer \$20 million from the PSA Surcharge request from this specific filing. As a result, the surcharge request was reduced to \$80 million with a recovery period of 24 months and the same implementation date. The effective surcharge request is \$0.001416 per kWh and would result in approximately a 1.7 percent revenue increase relative to the Base Fuel Recovery Amount of \$0.020743 per kWh.

Q. Describe the review performed on the Company's application.

A. The application was reviewed for reasonableness comparing natural gas and purchased power costs against known market information. In addition, a high level overview of the Company's natural gas, purchased power, coal and nuclear fuel procurement practices was performed through data requests and on site meetings with trading, procurement, hedging, and back office personnel.

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Q. Was a prudence review performed?

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A. No. With the removal from the application of \$20 million attributable to Palo Verde outages during the period April 1, 2005, through July 2005, the discussion of prudence has been deferred to a later date.

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A formal prudence review is typically performed during a rate case where there is time to adequately review the Company's policies and procedures, dispatch practices and software, compliance with contract provisions as well as to compare fuel and purchased power to market hubs such as Palo Verde, Henry Hub and futures markets such as NYMEX.

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Q. Did the procedural schedule allow time to perform a prudence review?

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No. The estimated time to do a thorough prudence audit could approach six months plus require the services of outside consultants to address nuclear plant outages.

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DRIVERS OF ENERGY COSTS

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Q. What factors are responsible for the rapid growth in the PSA account?

account to amounts that precipitated the filing for a PSA Surcharge.

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generation feedstock (natural gas, coal, and nuclear). Also, the Base Fuel Recovery

The majority of growth in the PSA account can be attributed to load growth, Company

generation makeup, power market shift to gas generation, and price increases in

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Amount of \$0.020743, which was based on 2003 actual costs, is not adequate to

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compensate for the fuel and purchased power market prices that have developed over the

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last two years. It is a combination of all the preceding factors that have driven up the PSA

Q. Discuss Company load growth.

A. The Company has experienced significant peak demand load growth, 600 MW over the last three years with an additional 300 MW forecasted for 2006. Figure 1 illustrates the growth in the APS peak load requirement for the period 2000 through 2005 as well as the projected 2006 peak. Load growth by itself does not necessarily result in uncollected fuel and purchased power costs when fuel costs are relatively stable and the on and off peak demands are relatively stable. The nature of the Company load during the summer is not stable, and based on the generation mix available to meet load the primary fuel source involved is natural gas for internally generated power and/or purchased power. The price of natural gas has had a direct correlation to the price of power required to meet peak load requirements.

Q. Discuss the Company's generation mix and purchased power markets.

Since 2001 the Company has added 1800 MWs of generation. It has all been natural gas-fired generation. Figure 1 illustrates the APS generation mix and the growth in gas-based generation utilized to meet peak demand. The coal and nuclear generation totals, which have provided a moderating effect on the PSA account, have remained constant. The MW amount of the Company's coal and nuclear generation is relatively constant, while the amount and percentage of natural gas fired generation and gas based purchased power has continued to increase. Figure 2 illustrates the percentage shift by generation type and purchased power from 2000 through the third quarter 2005. This increasing reliance on natural gas-fired generation and gas-based purchased power increases the Company's exposure to volatile gas prices. When required to go to the market for purchased power, the market price is determined once again by the price of natural gas. Almost all new generation added by merchant generators is gas-fired, including 4000 MW of generation within the state of Arizona since 2002. This means that when the Company must go to the

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purchased power market, now and for the foreseeable future, to meet load requirements it will pay a market price based on volatile gas prices.

The Company has experienced increased costs in all fuel areas as well as purchased

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Discuss increases in fuel cost. Q.

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power. The costs of coal and nuclear fuel have increased but at a much slower rate than natural gas. Figure 3 illustrates the relative cost increase per fuel type in the Company's fuel feedstock and purchased power mix. Using 2002 as a base year the cumulative cost increase for coal has been 18 percent, nuclear fuel 9 percent, natural gas 122 percent, and purchased power 67 percent. To a degree, the Company is able to exert some control over the coal and nuclear fuel costs because they are based on negotiated contracts that are primarily cost based and escalated on negotiated indices. The market price of natural gas presently has little to no correlation to cost of production. Neither the Company, nor anyone else, can control the price of natural gas at this time. It was apparent that natural gas is becoming a scarce commodity even prior to recent hurricanes; recent damage to drilling rigs, as well as other infrastructure, has added more uncertainty to the market and has resulted in gas prices that were viewed as impossible six months ago. See figure 4 which illustrates the rapid run up in natural gas forward prices.

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Has the Company been able to mitigate natural gas and purchased power costs? Q.

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Yes. The Company developed procedures in the late 1990's that were designed to limit its exposure to volatility in the fuel and purchased power markets. The program has evolved over the years as the development of relatively liquid commodity markets and financial equivalency contracts became available. The Company intended hedging to provide price stability, not profit maximization, and has strict hedging guidelines which prevent market speculation. In response to increased reliance on natural gas, accompanied by rapidly

escalating commodity prices, the Company in 2003 initiated a hedge plan that required near term (one year) gas and purchased power requirements, to be 75 percent hedged. In response to recent forecasted increases in market prices for gas and purchased power, the Company raised the hedge percentage to 85 percent for the last five months of 2005, and calendar year 2006. The Company is presently hedged 50 percent for 2007 and 35 percent for 2008. The amount of fuel and purchased power expense was reduced by approximately \$30 million during the four month period April 1 through August 1, 2005 because of the Company's hedging activities. The Company hedging strategy has worked effectively to limit cost increases. Additional savings will accrue through years 2005 and 2006, barring a complete collapse of the gas and purchased power markets.

Q. Is it possible to accurately predict the future price of natural gas and purchased power?

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A. No. Until the natural gas and purchased power markets know with any degree of certainty the extent of damage caused by recent hurricanes, the time frame for infrastructure repair and the extent of damage to drilling rigs, prices will remain high and volatile. See figures 4 and 5 which illustrate market price increases in natural gas and purchased power. A clearer picture of where the gas and purchased power markets are headed could be more transparent by December 31, 2005. A better market view, and additional Company cost data, will provide the information base needed to effectively evaluate the amount of change to the Base Fuel Recovery Amount Adjustor Rate for implementation in April 2006.

A.

Q. Is it likely for the under-collected PSA account balance to fall below \$100 million without the PSA Surcharge requested by the Company?

A. No. Per Company provided cost information there is an under-collected fuel and purchased power expense of \$127.7 million for the period April 1, 2005, through August 31, 2005. Of this amount, \$115.2 million has been deferred, and \$12.5 million has been paid for by Company stockholders, reflecting the 90/10 sharing of fuel costs mandated by Decision No. 67744. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate higher gas and purchased power market prices for September than for August which will result in the continued growth of the under-collected balance through the September reporting period. Additions to the under-collected balance should moderate for the last quarter of the year since the need for gas-fired generation and purchased power will decrease over the fall and winter shoulder months.

Q. Is it likely for the under-collected PSA account balance to fall below \$100 million with approval of the PSA Surcharge requested by the Company?

No. The \$80 million surcharge requested by the Company is to be collected over 24 months from November 2005 through April 2006. The under-collected balance will continue to grow during the September reporting period. Predicted peak load growth of an additional 300 MW for 2006 only increases the reliance by the Company on high priced natural gas and purchased power to meet load, the costs of which will most likely be higher than the Base Rate Fuel Amount and Adjustor Rate was designed to recover. The Company in their filing projected an under-collected balance at year end 2006 of \$255 million with the Surcharge approval and an increase of 3 mills per kWh in the Adjustor Rate in April 2006. Without the Surcharge approval, the Company projects an under-collected amount of \$274 million with an increase of 4 mills per kWh in the Adjustor Rate in April 2006. Staff has reviewed the Company's projections and found them to be

reasonable. The year end 2006 under-collected balance amounts were based on August 31, 2005, forward price curves for natural gas and purchased power (Figure 6 illustrates the growth in the under-collected balance through year end 2006). As of September 30, 2005, the latest forward price curves show additional price escalation in both natural gas and purchased power through year end 2006. A more precise picture of under-collected balances will emerge from the upcoming review of actual Company cost data for the period April through year end 2005. This review will determine any change to be made in the Adjustor Rate which will have a direct correlation on the growth, or decline, in under-collected fuel and purchased power expenses going forward.

CUSTOMER IMPACT

- Q. Has Staff examined the impact APS' proposed PSA Surcharge would have on customers' bills?
- A. Yes. Staff examined the impact of the surcharge on residential customers taking service on Rate Schedule E-12. E-12 is the Company's basic residential tariff which does not include demand charges. As of the end of September 2005, 416,095 residential customers were taking service on E-12. The E-12 rate (and rate structure) differ for summer and winter months. Also, the usage of E-12 customers differs substantially across the summer and winter. For these reasons, Staff examined the effect of the surcharge on E-12 customers in a representative summer month and a representative winter month. Chart 1 below is based on customer usage in July of 2005.

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Chart 1 Surcharge Impact on E-12 Summer Bills

		Customer Bill		Surcharge amount		Surcharge
	kWh	(no s	urcharge)	(\$0.00	1416/kWh)	% impact
Low Use	785	\$	80.27	\$	1.11	1.39%
Median Use	818	\$	84.13	\$	1.16	1.4%
Average Use	1047	\$	112.81	\$	1.48	1.31%
High Use	1309	\$	145.63	\$	1.85	1.27%

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Chart 2 below is based on customer usage from December 2004.

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Chart 2 Surcharge Impact on E-12 Winter Bills

		Customer Bill		Surcharge amount		Surcharge
	kWh	(no s	(no surcharge) (\$0.001416/kWh)		% impact	
Low Use	508	\$	46.16	\$	0.72	1.56%
Median Use	531	\$	47.89	\$	0.75	1.6%
Average Use	677	\$	58.84	\$	0.96	1.63%
High Use	846	\$	71.52	\$	1.20	1.68%

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Charts 1 and 2 show the Company's proposed surcharge's impact on E-12 customers with different usage characteristics. The Company's proposed surcharge will raise E-12 customers' summer bills by \$1.48 or 1.3 percent on average. APS' proposed surcharge

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will raise E-12 customers' winter bills by \$0.96 or 1.6 percent on average.

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SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Q. Summarize your testimony and recommendations in the filing.

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gas and purchased power costs. The preceding were evaluated in order to draw a

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correlation to the large under-collected balance in the Company PSA account. Analysis

Testimony addressed the Company load growth, generation mix, and increasing natural

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indicates the Base Rate Fuel Amount, which was based on 2003 cost data, is not adequate

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to compensate for a growing peak load requirement which is being met with gas-fired

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generation and purchased power. Natural gas prices have increased 58 percent while

purchased power prices have increased 45 percent during the period 2003 through the third quarter 2005. The \$80 million PSA Surcharge request is modest in comparison to the actual under-collected balance and should be approved. The impact on residential customers based on a 24-month recovery period will be an increase of \$1.48 per month, (1.3%) during the summer months and \$0.96 per month (1.6%) during the winter months.

Staff understands that the Company's request represents a burden on the Company's customers. However, Staff does not believe rejecting or delaying the Company's application will result in any long-term benefit for those customers. If the Company's request were to be denied or deferred, the \$80 million in question would remain an undercollection in the balancing account, accrue interest, and would have to be recovered at a later date. Additionally, given the state of the natural gas market, the under-collected balance is likely to grow over the near term with, or without, approval of the Company's request (refer to Figure 6). Denying, or deferring the Company's current request will result in future Surcharge requests of even greater magnitude. Staff believes there is some value in addressing the current under-collection now so that the effect of increased fuel costs on the Company's customers can be spread over time.

Because this proceeding did not include an evaluation of the prudence of the Company's fuel and purchased power purchases, approval of the Surcharge in this proceeding shall not impair the Commission's ability to consider whether such costs are imprudent or otherwise subject to disallowance in a later rate case or proceeding specifically intended to consider the reasonableness of costs associated with the Surcharge. In other words, should the Commission determine that costs allowed for recovery in the proceeding were imprudent or not recoverable; their allowance in this proceeding shall not prevent their subsequent disallowance and implementation of a true-up related to those costs. Such

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findings could occur either in the Company's next rate case, or in a separate proceeding commenced specifically for that purpose.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Company's requested \$0.001416 per kWh Surcharge. Staff recommends that the Surcharge remain in effect until it collects \$80 million or two years have elapsed from the date of Commission approval, whichever comes first.

The complexity of the PSA balancing account, and rapid changes in fuel and purchase power costs require changes in the timing, and content of the PSA Report. The changes must enable quicker and more in-depth evaluations, of the PSA Balancing Account under and over-collected balances. To enable these improvements, Staff makes the following additional recommendations:

APS provide the Power Supply Adjustor Report within thirty (30) days of the end of the reporting period. As an example, the August report would be due the last working day in September.

APS provide in the Power Supply Adjustor Report any costs attributable to unplanned outages during the reporting period, and report these costs as a separate line item. Indicate whether the outage(s) are on-going, or completed.

APS provide with the Power Supply Adjustor Report, a monthly projection for the next 12 month period showing the estimated under/over-collected balance in the PSA balancing account utilizing the latest forward price curves for natural gas and purchased power. Provide in tabular and figure formats.

- Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony?
- 2 A. Yes, it does.

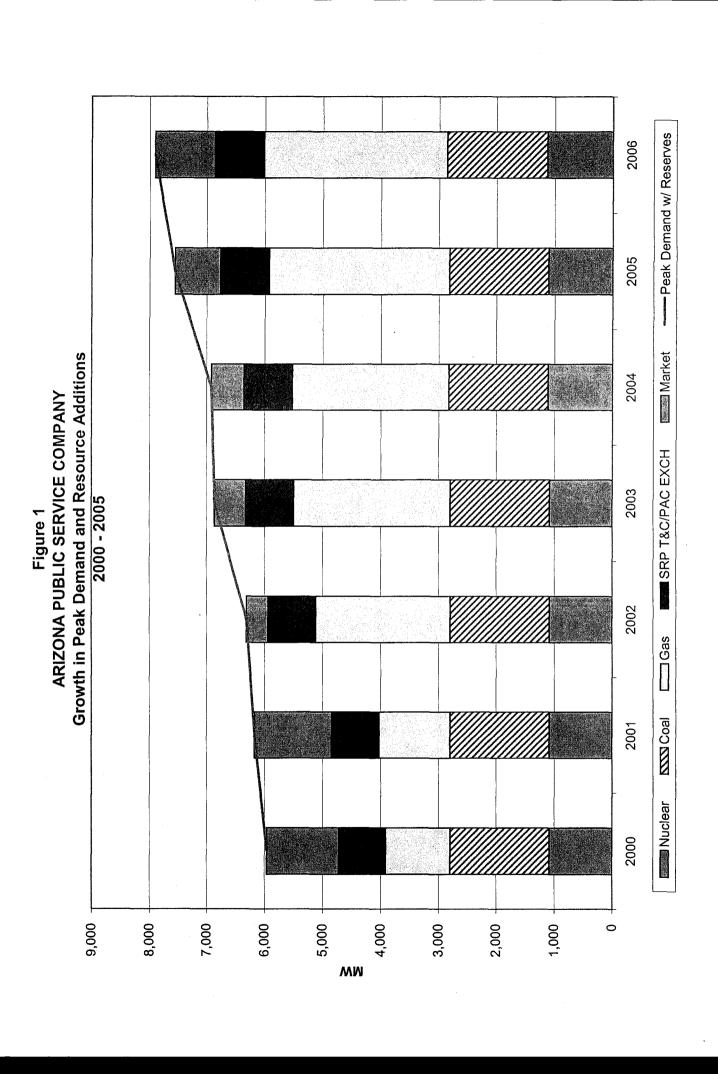
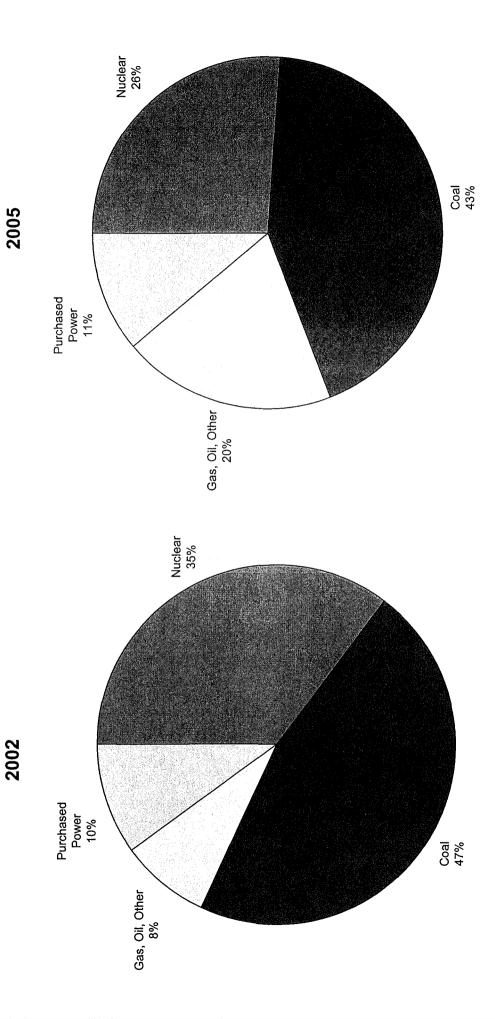
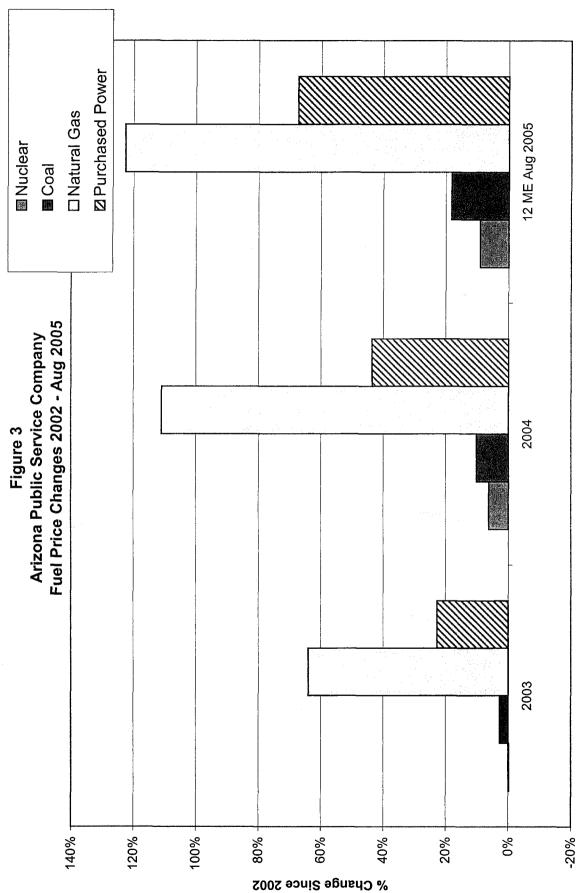


Figure 2
Arizona Public Service Company
Energy Mix by Resource Type





Note: Natural gas and power price changes do not include commodity hedging impacts.

